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ADVANCED TRAINING  
IN FRENCH PRONUNCIATION



*Pierre Delattre*



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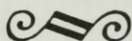
ADVANCED TRAINING  
IN FRENCH PRONUNCIATION

by

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The College Store  
Middlebury, Vermont

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## FOREWORD

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This booklet accompanies a set of five records of French speech material for students who wish to acquire the essential phonetic characteristics of French. It aims to make possible for those who are not especially trained in phonetic theory to understand the subject of each of its seventeen chapters, as well as the idea behind every phrase of the recorded material.

Its method is analytical. Unless the student has a perfect gift for imitation, his chances of acquiring complete French speech habits depend on how well he can separate the phonetic features and practice them individually, one at a time. Since many chapters have subdivisions, the phonetic features of French that are to be studied separately here are of a considerable number.

The type of French chosen is indeed that of the most cultivated people of Northern France. But it is not in their style of careful reading or diction; it is rather in their style of natural conversation: not what they think they say, not what they tell you to say, but what they do say when they are unaware of being observed. Let us call it "the most unaffected French of the most cultivated people."

In the booklet, the left hand pages are reserved for the recorded material; the right hand pages for the explanations and theory. Notes about specific sentences generally face those sentences, on the opposite page, and bearing the same number.

On the records, each sentence is followed by a silent interval that provides sufficient time for one repetition.

The explanations in this booklet are quite summary. Those who desire more detailed theory regarding the subjects treated in each of the chapters will find it in *PRINCIPES DE PHONÉTIQUE FRANÇAISE À L'USAGE DES ÉTUDIANTS ANGLO-AMÉRICAINS*, which can be obtained from Middlebury College, The French Department, Middlebury, Vermont.

The recorded sentences printed on the left hand pages were selected from a book of phonetic exercises entitled *LES DIFFICULTÉS PHONÉTIQUES DU FRANÇAIS*, also available from the French Department of Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont.

The phonetic transcriptions use the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association. A key to this alphabet can be found on the last page.

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# C O N T E N T S

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	<u>page</u>
	Foreword.....2
	Contents.....3
Record 1-A	I. Open Syllabication. Exercises.....4
	Theory.....5
	II. Nasal Juncture. Exercises.....6
	Theory.....7
Record 1-B	III. Rhythm. Exercises.....8
	Theory.....9
	IV. Accent. Exercises.....10
	Theory.....11
Record 2-A	V. Intonation. Theory.....13
	Exercises.....14
Record 2-B	VI. Vowel Tension. Exercises.....18
	Theory.....19
	VII. Non-Aspiration. Theory.....19
	Exercises.....20
	VIII. Consonant Fronting. Theory.....21
	Exercises.....22
Record 3-A	IX. Consonant Tension. Exercises.....22
	Theory.....23
	X. Vowel Fronting. Exercises.....24
	Theory.....25
	XI. Fricative R. Exercises.....26
	Theory.....27
	XII. Initial and Final Vowel. Exercises.....28
	Theory.....29
Record 3-B	XIII. Consonant Release. Exercises.....30
	Theory.....31
	XIV. Semi-Vowel. Exercises.....32
	Theory.....33
	XV. Word Linking. Exercises.....34
	Theory.....35
Record 4-A	XVI. Vowel Color (Quality). Theory.....37
	Exercises.....38
Record 4-B	XVI. Vowel Color (Quality) (cont.). Exercises.....42
	Theory.....43
Record 5-A	XVII. Unstable e [ə]. Theory.....45
	Exercises.....46
Record 5-B	XVII. Unstable e [ə] (cont.). Exercises.....50
	Theory.....51
	Phonetic Symbols.....52

SYLLABATION OUVERTE

1. Un homme éminent n'amène aucun ennui  
[œ no me mi nã na mɛ no kœ nã nɥi]
2. En chassant on fait sécher son visage au vent  
[ã ʃa sã ɔ fe se ʃe sɔ vi za ʒo vã]
3. On admet que la technique des objets en capsules n'est pas  
exactement stagnante  
[ɔ na dme kla tɛ kni kde zɔ bʒe zã ka psy lne pa zɛ gza ktɛ  
mã sta gnã t]
4. Ses anecdotes ses blasphèmes et ses calomnies l'ont  
amené à une rupture avec tous les autres acteurs  
[se za nɛ kdo tse bla sɛ me se ka lɔ mni lɔ ta mne  
a y nry pty ra vɛ ktu le zo trɛ za ktœ r]
5. Il a tellement mal filmé l'île d'Elbe que le soldat allemand  
n'a nullement pu le calmer  
[i la tɛ lmã ma lfi lme li ldɛ lb kɛ lso lda a lmã na  
ny lmã py lka lme]
6. Un sergent de l'armée de Serbie a hardiment prêté serment  
sous les arcades ornées de verdure  
[œ sɛ rʒã dla rme dɛ rbi a a rdi mã pre te sɛ rmã  
su le za rka dɔ rne dvɛ rdy r]



# I. OPEN SYLLABICATION

An "open syllable" is one that ends in a vowel -- that is to say, with the mouth "open." French shows a strong tendency to open its syllables; English to close them (i.e., to close the mouth at the end of syllables by anticipating the following consonant). An example will make this clear. In an egg at eight, spoken by a native American, each syllable ends in a consonant; but spoken by a Frenchman, it sounds somewhat like a ne ga teight because all the syllables are "open."

To acquire the habit of opening syllables -- or to overcome the habit of anticipating consonants -- repeat sentences 1 to 5, dividing all syllables after the vowels: [æ--no--me--mi--nã...], [i--la--tẽ--lmã--ma--lfi--lme...]. Naturally, this represents an exaggeration, but it is necessary to exaggerate while practicing this phonetic feature. By overdoing open syllabication in slow motion, you will eventually overcome your tendency to close all syllables. At the same time, it will immensely improve the pureness of your vowels.

Note that the difficulty increases as you go down the sentences, from 1 to 5.

1. This sentence teaches not to anticipate the nasal consonants [n], [m]. Anglo-Americans tend to anticipate all consonants, but nasal consonants are among those they anticipate the most. They would say: [æn--om--eminã]; the record says: [æ--no--meminã]. They would say: [namẽn--okæn--ãnuĩ]; the record says: [namẽ--nokã--nãnuĩ].

2. This sentence teaches not to anticipate the fricatives [f], [s], [ʃ], [v], [z], [ʒ]. Do not say: [viza3--o vã] but: [viza--3o vã].

3. Before two consonants, it becomes more difficult to end syllables with a vowel: [3--na--dme--kla--tẽ--kni--kde--zẽ--b3e...]. Yet this sentence is relatively easy to articulate in open syllables because here the first consonant of each group of two is slightly more close than the second.

4. The difficulty increases here because the two consonants of most groups are equally close: [se--za--nẽ--kdẽ--tse--bla--sfẽ--me--se--ka--lẽ--mni--l3--ta--mne--a--y--nry--pty--ra--vẽ--ktu--le--zẽ--trẽ--za--ktẽ r].

5. Each group of consonants begins with an [l]. Thus the first consonant is considerably less close than the second and it is very difficult to open syllables. Besides, the [l]'s of this sentence are of the type (called "implosive") that is markedly anticipated by Anglo-Americans. They are even partly vocalized into [u]. To overcome this tendency, in addition to opening the syllables, bring the tip of the tongue forward to contact your upper incisors for each [l]: [i--la--tẽ--lmã--ma--lfi--lme...].

6. Each group of consonants begins with an [r]. The difficulty in opening the syllables is at least as great as in sentence 5 since the first consonant of each group is again much less close than the second. (If you do not know how to articulate the French [r], postpone sentence 6 until you have mastered Record 3-A.)

REFUS DE NASALISATION

1. Passer Penser [pa se pã se]
2. Trappeur Trempeur [tra pœ r trã pœ r]
3. Béton béton béton bé tomber  
[be tɔ̃ be tɔ̃ be tɔ̃ be tɔ̃ be]
4. Dit l'un dit l'un dit l'un dit lundi  
[di lœ di lœ di lœ di lœ di]
5. Il a manqué tomber sur le plancher lundi à l'instant où  
les enfants anglais entraient  
[i la mǎ ke tɔ̃ be sy rlœ plã se lœ di a lœ stã u le zã fã  
zã gle ã tre]
6. Quand on pense à tout ce qui manque au monde en temps de guerre  
on se demande ou commence une telle honte  
[kã tɔ̃ pã sa tu ski mǎ ko mɔ̃ dã tã dge rɔ̃ sdə mǎ du kɔ̃ mǎ  
sy nte lə ɔ̃ t]
7. Sainte Fernande mange un immonde repas à la lueur blanche de  
son humble lampe  
[sɛ tfe rnã dmǎ ʒœ ni mɔ̃ drœ pa a la lœœ rblã sde sɔ̃ nǎ blœ  
lã p]
8. Laide Laine [lɛ d] [lɛ n]
9. Fade Fane [fa d] [fa n]



## II. NASAL JUNCTURE

Joining nasal sounds to non-nasal ones (oral ones) presents difficulties that do not exist in English. In French, oral and nasal sounds are sharply delimited. English speech habits tend to let nasality spread to neighboring oral sounds. Keeping nasality "at home" is the purpose of this drill.

### A. Nasal Vowel Followed by Oral Consonant: tom-ber [tɔ̃-be]

This is really another case of open syllabication. If the consonant is anticipated, an additional consonant appears (a nasal consonant) between the nasal vowel and the oral consonant. Penser [pɑ̃-se] becomes [pɑ̃-nse], tremper [trɑ̃-pe] becomes [trɑ̃-mpe], manquer [mɑ̃-ke] becomes [mɑ̃-nke]. To avoid this, divide the syllables after the vowels even more strictly than in the preceding exercises of open syllabication.

1, 2. You don't hear an additional consonant in passer, trappeur. Take care that you don't hear one either in penser, trempeur: [pɑ̃---se], [trɑ̃---pœr].

3. The fact that you don't add a consonant between [tɔ̃] and [be] in "béton béton" but that you tend to add one in tomber, shows that overcoming the difficulty is largely a matter of syllabication.

4. Similarly if you can easily say "dit l'un dit l'un" without adding an [n] between un and dit, do not add an [n] between un and di in lundi either: [lɑ̃---di].

5. Here the vowels are mostly in unaccented syllables: [i-la-mɑ̃-ke-tɔ̃-be...]. "Unaccented" in French, means all syllables that are not final of a word or a group of words.

6. Here the nasal vowels are mostly in accented syllables, and are followed by words that begin with vowels. "Accented," in French, means only the syllables that are final of a word or a group of words.

7. Here the nasal vowels are again in accented syllables, but the words that follow them begin with consonants. Thus the nasal vowels are in fact before two consonants. This increases the tendency to consonantal anticipation and makes open syllabication more difficult.

### B. Oral Vowel before Nasal Consonant: ra-mer [ra-me]

In French, an oral vowel must not sound the least bit nasal. This is again a matter of open syllabication. Separate the syllables well after the vowel. The least mental anticipation of the consonant (even though it may not be visible on your lips) would give the preceding oral vowel a nasal color.

8, 9. To test your tendency to nasalize, see if your ai sounds the same in laine and laide, your a the same in fane and fade. If you cannot notice the difference by closely listening, try pinching your nose above the nostrils to feel the presence or absence of nasal vibrations. Work until you feel no nasal vibration either for the vowels in laide, fade, or for those in laine, fane.

10. Jeanne est trop bonne pour être la femme d'un tel jeune homme  
[ʒa ne tʁo bɔ̃ npu ʁɛ tʁɛ la fa mɔ̃tɛ lʒœ nɔ̃ m]
11. Quand la montagne lui fait signe il en gagne les cimes  
[kɑ̃ la mɔ̃ ta ɲ lɥi fɛ si ɲi lɑ̃ ga ɲ le si m]
12. Comme il a soigné son piano la sonorité en a gagné  
[kɔ̃ mi la swa ɲɛ sɔ̃ pja nɔ̃ la sɔ̃ nɔ̃ ri tɛ ɑ̃ na ga ɲɛ]
13. Bal Mal [ba l] [ma l]
14. Buse Muse [by z] [my z]
15. Il met des mots amusants sur son nouveau canot  
[i lme de mo za my zɑ̃ sy ʁsɔ̃ nu vo ka nɔ̃]
16. En se promenant dans la campagne Antoine a rencontré Fantine  
qui se baignait dans une fontaine  
[ɑ̃ spro mɔ̃ɑ̃ dɑ̃ la kɑ̃ pa ɲɑ̃ twa na ʁɑ̃ kɔ̃ tʁɛ fɑ̃ ti nki sbe  
ne dɑ̃ zy ɲfɔ̃ tɛ n]

## Record 1-B

## RYTHME

- |    |                                  |  |
|----|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Un deux trois                    | J'ai deux chats                          |
| 2. | Un deux trois quat               | J'ai deux chats noirs                    |
| 3. | Un deux trois quat cinq          | J'ai deux beaux chats noirs              |
| 4. | Un deux trois quat cinq six      | J'ai deux beaux gros chats noirs         |
| 5. | J'ai deux chats                  | comme cette chatte                       |
| 6. | J'ai deux chats noirs            | comme cette chatte grise                 |
| 7. | J'ai deux beaux chats noirs      | comme cette belle chatte grise           |
| 8. | J'ai deux beaux gros chats noirs | comme cette belle grosse<br>chatte grise |
9. J'ai cinq beaux grands chats blancs  
[ʒɛ sɛ̃ bɔ̃ gʁɑ̃ ʃa blɑ̃]
10. J'ai quinze belles grandes chattes grises  
[ʒɛ kɛ̃ zɛ̃ lɡrɑ̃ dʃa tɡʁi z]
11. On n'a rien donné d'important à imprimer  
[ɔ̃ na ʁjɛ̃ dɔ̃ ne dɛ̃ pɔ̃ ʁtɑ̃ a ɛ̃ pʁi me]
12. On allait danser tous les lundis dans la banlieue  
[ɔ̃ na le dɑ̃ se tu le lœ̃ di dɑ̃ la bɑ̃ ljø]
13. Il a prétendu vous avoir emprunté vingt-deux pensées  
[i la pʁɛ̃ tɑ̃ dy vu za vwa ʁɑ̃ pʁɛ̃ te vɛ̃ tɔ̃ pɑ̃ se]

10, 11. In these sentences, the oral vowels that must not take nasal color from the nasal consonants that follow them are generally in accented syllables: [3a--ne--trɔ--bɔ--npu--rɛ--trɔ--la--fa--mdʒ--tɛ--lʒɛ--nɔ m].

12. Here the oral vowels that are in danger of being nasalized are in unaccented syllables: [kɔ--mi--la--swa--ne--sɜ--pja--no...].

### C. Oral Vowel after nasal Consonant: [naʒ]

A and B represent the most noticeable difficulties in oral-nasal juncture. But you may also have a slight tendency to carry the nasality of a consonant over to the following vowel.

13. Listen to your [a] in bal, then test your [a] in mal. It should sound no more nasal than in bal.

14. Listen to your [y] in buse, then test your [y] in muse. It should sound no more nasal than in buse.

15. In the syllables met, mots, mu, nou, not, the vowels should not sound the least nasal. Articulatory tenseness will help to cut off the nasality between the nasal consonant and the oral vowel. Articulatory laxness would let nasality spread.

### D

16. This sentence contains all three of the difficulties that are analyzed in A, B, and C.

---

Record 1-B

## III. RHYTHM

The main difference between English and French speech-rhythm lies in the distribution of force on the syllables. English syllables are of very unequal force: some are strong, some are weak. French tends to give equal force to all syllables of a group (and also equal length to all except the last one, which is longer), somewhat as when you count. Hence the counting exercises as a model on which to equalize the syllables of French words, groups, and sentences.

1.4 All syllables are light, having only one consonant each, generally. In such cases it is fairly easy to reproduce the equal-force rhythm of counting. (Imitate at the same time the falling intonation of each group.)

5-8. Light syllables are followed by heavy ones (packed with consonants) which are harder to equalize.

9-13. Oral syllables are mixed with nasal syllables. Here the difficulty lies in giving no more length to the nasals than to the orals.

14-33. Typical words in which you might wrongly tend to stress some syllable other than the last. Put equal force on all, and equal length on all but the last, which is longer (not stronger). (Don't forget to imitate the falling intonation.)

14. Un deux trois Vendredi [vã drẽ di]  
 15. Un deux trois Mercredi [mẽ rkrẽ di]  
 16. Un deux trois Février [fe vri je]  
 17. Un deux trois Oubliez [u bli je]
18. Un deux trois Instruction [ẽ stry ksʃɔ̃]  
 19. Un deux trois Attention [a tã sjɔ̃]  
 20. Un deux trois Continuez [kɔ̃ ti nɥe]  
 21. Un deux trois Commençons [kõ mã sɔ̃]
22. Un deux trois quat J'ai essayé [ʒe e se je]  
 23. Un deux trois quat J'ai continué [ʒe kɔ̃ ti nɥe]  
 24. Un deux trois quat J'ai commencé [ʒe kõ mã se]  
 25. Un deux trois quat J'ai étudié [ʒe e ty dʒe]
26. Un deux trois quat Dépêchez-vous [de pe ʃe vu]  
 27. Un deux trois quat Voudriez-vous [vu dri je vu]  
 28. Un deux trois quat Expliquez-moi [ẽ kspli ke mwa]  
 29. Un deux trois quat Asseyez-vous [a se je vu]
30. Un deux trois quat cinq Téléphonnez-moi [te le fõ ne mwa]  
 31. Un deux trois quat cinq Hospitalité [õ spi ta li te] te]
32. Un deux trois quat cinq six Responsabilité [rẽ spɔ̃ sa bi li]  
 33. Un deux trois quat cinq six Impossibilité [ẽ põ si bi li te]

## ACCENT

1. C'est une nouvelle robe [se ty nnu vẽ lrõõ b]  
 2. Elle est un peu large [ẽ le tã pø laa rɔ̃]  
 3. J'ai un rendez-vous [ʒe õ rã de vuu]  
 4. C'est beaucoup trop beau [se bo ku trõ boo]
5. Et voilà qu'il neige [e vwa la ki lnẽ ʒ]  
 6. Va sur l'autre rive [va sy rlo trẽ riĩ v]  
 7. C'est un pays neutre [se tã pe i nøø tr]  
 8. Vous n'avez pas honte [vu na ve pa ʒɔ̃ t]
9. Sa robe est trop courte [sa rõ be trõ kuu rt]  
 10. Mettez votre écharpe [me te võ tre ʃaa rp]  
 11. Ils sont déjà secs [i lsɔ̃ de ʒa sɛ k]  
 12. Allez voir qui frappe [a le vwa rki fraa p]
13. Espèce d'imbécile [ẽ spẽ sdẽ ɛ̃ sii l]  
 14. C'est intelligent [se tẽ tẽ li ʒãã]  
 15. Quel bavard que ce type [kẽ lɔ̃ va rkẽ stii p]  
 16. C'est une catastrophe [se ty nka ta strõõ f]

14-17. See that you don't overstress the first syllable and understress the second.

18-21. See that you don't overstress the second syllable and understress the first.

22-25. See that you don't overstress the third syllable and understress the second.

26-29. See that you don't overstress the second syllable and understress the first and third.

30-31. See that you don't overstress the first and third syllables and understress the second and fourth.

32-33. See that you don't overstress the second and fourth syllables and understress the first, third, and fifth.

#### IV. ACCENT

---

Accent (or Stress) is what makes one syllable of a group of syllables prominent over the others. Let us consider its nature and its place. In English, its nature is primarily **force** (intensity): the accented syllable is stronger than the others (impossible, difficult). Its place is irregular: the accented syllable is the first, or the second, or the third, etc., depending on the word: (photograph, photographer, photographic). In French, its nature is primarily **duration**: the accented syllable is longer than the others (not at all stronger); and its place is always the same: the last syllable of a word or a group of words: (photo, photographie, photographie, photographie d'essai, ces deux photos-là).

1-4. In these sentences, on the average, the last syllable is twice as long as the others.

5-8. The last syllable is more than twice as long as the others when the following consonant is very weak (the weakest consonants are [r z ʒ v], or when close o [o], or close eu [ø], or back a [ɑ], or a nasal vowel [ɛ̃ œ̃ ɔ̃ ɑ̃], is followed by a consonant.

9-12. The last syllable is less than twice as long as the others before strong consonants or strong groups of consonants. (The strongest consonants are [p t k]; the strongest groups are those that do not end in [r] or [l].)

13-16. Note that in French the uniform rhythmic pattern and the accent of duration on the final syllable (1-12) tend to make the individual French word lose its identity in the group. But when a word has to stand out, French uses an additional accent, an accent of force (intensity), similar to the English accent. Its place is always toward the beginning of the word, but it depends somewhat on how emotive or intellectual it is. To give emotive emphasis, this accent falls on the first syllable beginning with a consonant, and bears more on that consonant than on the vowel that follows (13, 14, 15). To give intellectual emphasis, it always falls on the first syllable, even if the word begins with a vowel (16).

In sentences 13-16, as you stress the consonants, see that you don't lose their qualities of **tension** (Record 3-A) and **non-aspiration** (Record 2-B).

INTONATION



## V. INTONATION

---

French, like English, offers an infinite number of intonation patterns. The five patterns that have been selected here for practice are five basic ones.

These five basic patterns do not differ from the corresponding English ones in their **general** aspect as sentences: the same five patterns exist in English. In both languages, very generally speaking, 1) an intonation of declaration falls at the end; 2) an implication rises moderately; 3) a question to be answered by "yes" or "no" rises sharply; 4) a question not to be answered by "yes" or "no" falls sharply; 5) a command falls. But French and English intonations differ in many **particular** aspects, especially in the manner in which a rise or a fall is produced. Let us note those particular differences, while listening to the whole intonation record.

a) Observe that a French rise or fall does not occur **during** a syllable (as is often the case in English). In French, each syllable is said practically on a single note. Practice this especially on the last syllable of each accent group. (A long sentence comprises a number of groups of words often called "accent groups" because each one ends with an accented syllable.)

b) Observe that a rising group is featured by a steeply rising interval **between** the last two syllables (not by a progressive rise on the accented syllable, as is often the case in English). Similarly, a falling group is featured by a steeply falling interval **between** the last two syllables.

c) Observe that rising groups are much more characteristic of French than of English, and therefore need special attention and abundant practice. In a declaration, for instance, in French, it is only the last group that falls (to indicate finality), all the others rise (to indicate continuation); in English, groups that indicate continuation rise much less regularly, in fact they often fall after the stressed syllable.

d) But observe that in French all groups do not rise to the same note (pitch, frequency). The one that ends a series of groups rises higher than the others. Thus in declarative sentences of more than two groups, note that there is always one that rises considerably higher than the others. This separates most declarations into two series of groups: q) moderately rising groups followed by one sharply rising group; r) moderately rising groups followed by one sharply falling group. q is sometimes called the question, and r the answer.

e) Finally observe that, in French sentences, the highest syllables (highest note, pitch, frequency) are not stronger (greater intensity, force) than the others. In English, strong syllables (those that bear the accent) are almost invariably higher in pitch (**impossible, impossibility**) so that height and force are inseparable. Take care that in French you do not add intensity to the high syllables, as you would tend to by your English articulatory habits. It would place a sort of accent (of an English type) on syllables that are completely unaccented in French. And watch, even more closely, that your pitch does not rise on any more syllables than is indispensable. The reason is that each syllable you utter on a high pitch, you are also tempted to stress with undue intensity.



## 1. Déclaration

1. C'est lui  
[se lui]
2. C'est lui qui parlait  
[se lui ki pa rle]
3. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa r]
4. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir dans votre atelier  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa rdã vo tra tẽ lje]
5. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir dans votre atelier  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa rdã vo tra tẽ lje  
quand vous êtes entré  
kã vu ze tã tre]
6. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir dans votre atelier  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa rdã vo tra tẽ lje  
quand vous êtes entré nous inviter  
kã vu ze tã tre nu zẽ vi te]
7. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir dans votre atelier  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa rdã vo tra tẽ lje  
quand vous êtes entré nous inviter à souper  
kã vu ze tã tre nu zẽ vi te a su pe]
8. C'est lui qui parlait d'aller vous voir dans votre atelier  
[se lui ki pa rle da le vu vwa rdã vo tra tẽ lje  
quand vous êtes entré nous inviter à souper chez vous  
kã vu ze tã tre nu zẽ vi te a su pe se vu]

## 2. Implication

9. Je n'y comprends rien  
[ʒni kɔ̃ prã rjẽ]
10. Il prétend qu'il ne peut pas  
[i lpre tã ki lnẽ pø pa]
11. Avec un temps pareil personne n'est à l'heure  
[a ve kã tã pa rɛ jpe rso nne ta læ r]
12. Ce que je te reprocherais moi-même si je voulais m'y mettre  
[ske ʒtẽ rpro ʃre mwa mɛ msi ʒvu le mi mɛ tr  
tu sais  
ty se]

## 1. Declaration

Whether it comprises one or many groups of words, a declaration ends its last group (or only group if there is only one) in a falling interval between the last two syllables, this falling interval being the widest of all falling intervals that may occur in that group. But it ends any other group but the last in a rising interval between the last two syllables, this rising interval being the widest of all rising intervals that may occur in that group. Thus although a declaration always ends in a falling interval, its most characteristically French feature lies in the rising intervals that end all groups but the last.

Of all the rising intervals that end groups, the widest one (or ones) belong to the group (or groups) that end a series of groups or a major division of the sentence. (In sentences 1-8, there is only one very wide interval for each sentence, but in very long sentences there can be several.) In other words, the highest note (or notes) of an elaborate declaration occurs at the end of any series of groups that is not the last series of the sentence. This very high note must stand out clearly if the different parts of the sentence are to be well contrasted. It ends the "question" (or questions) of the sentence, and announces the "answer" or concluding series of groups.

1-8. All groups rise but the last. (If there is only one group in the sentence, it falls.) The end of the "question" rises higher than the other rising groups.

1. One falling group.
2. One rising group and one falling group.
3. Two rising groups and one falling group.
4. Three rising, one falling.
5. Four rising, one falling. Highest on atelier.
6. Five rising, one falling. Highest on atelier.
7. Six rising, one falling. Highest on atelier.
8. Seven rising, one falling. Highest on atelier.

## 2. Implication

An implication rises moderately, somewhat as would the moderately rising groups of a declaration. It is in fact a declaration from which the conclusion is omitted. Observe carefully the small interval between the last two syllables of each group.

9-12 .To find the very moderate degree of rising required, imagine what is implied. For instance:

9. Je n'y comprends rien, (à cette leçon).
10. Il prétend qu'il ne peut pas, (le paresseux).
11. Avec un temps pareil, personne n'est à l'heure, (forcément).
12. Ce que je te reprocherais, moi-même, si je voulais m'y mettre, tu sais, (ça t'étonnerait).

3. Question ascendante

13. Viendrez-vous
14. Viendrez-vous bientôt
15. Viendrez-vous bientôt nous voir
16. Viendrez-vous bientôt nous voir chez nous
17. Viendrez vous bientôt nous voir chez nous au bord de la mer
18. Viendrez-vous bientôt nous voir chez nous au bord de la mer  
[vjẽ dre vu bjẽ to nu vwa r/ẽ nu o bõ rdẽ la mẽ rme di te ra nẽ]

Méditerranée

4. Commandement

19. Dépêchez-vous
20. Dépêchez-vous de finir
21. Dépêchez-vous de finir votre café
22. Dépêchez-vous de finir votre café et de débarrasser
23. Dépêchez-vous de finir votre café et de débarrasser la table
24. Dépêchez-vous de finir votre café et de débarrasser la table  
[de pe ʃe vu dfi ni rvõ trẽ ka fe e dde ba ra se la ta

et le buffet  
ble lby fe]

5. Question descendante

25. Que voulez-vous
26. Que voulez-vous commander
27. Que voulez-vous commander pour le dîner
28. Que voulez-vous commander pour le dîner d'après-demain
29. Que voulez-vous commander pour le dîner d'après-demain  
[kẽ vu le vu kõ mã de pu rlẽ di ne da pre dẽ]

à Montparnasse  
a mã pa rna s]

### 3. Rising Question

Most questions that rise can be answered by "yes" or "no," as can those of the record. Between the last two syllables, the rise is sharp and indispensable. A rise between the other syllables is not indispensable. But the more forcefully the question is asked, the more a continuous rise from syllable to syllable is likely to appear. For instance:

Forcefully: [vjɛ dre vu]  
Mildly: [vjɛ dre vu]

Both are correct as long as a sharp interval separates the last two syllables. However, the best for Anglo-Americans is to practice continuously rising intonations.

13-18. See that you do not rise unduly on the last syllable, but between the last two syllables. On the last syllable, keep the same note throughout, as much as possible.

### 4. Command

A command has a sharply falling intonation. The more forceful the command, the higher it will start and the lower it will end.

19-24. A continuous fall from syllable to syllable is the best intonation to practice for Americans, but others are heard. For instance:

Forcefully: [de pe se vu]  
Mildly: [de pe se vu]

### 5. Falling Question

Most questions that are not to be answered by "yes" or "no" have a falling intonation. The more forceful the question, the higher it will start and the lower it will end.

25-29. It is advisable for Anglo-Americans to practice a continuous fall from syllable to syllable. However, other forms are heard. For instance:

Forcefully: [kə vu le vu]  
Mildly: [kə vu le vu]

(The last form can be used by French natives, but it is extremely dangerous for Anglo-Americans because they are tempted to add intensity to the syllable [le] since they cannot easily dissociate intensity from high pitch.)

Note. Commands and questions of the types in parts 4 and 5 above are seldom without some additional implication or emphasis that modifies them in an infinite number of ways and degrees. But if there is nothing more than the straight command or the straight question, two falling intervals are generally indispensable: one between the first two syllables and one between the last two.

TENSION VOCALIQUE

1. Laissez l'ainé des bébés chez les Léger cet été  
[le se le ne de be be ʃe le le ʒe sɛ te te]
2. Les délégués répétaient qu'ils étaient déprimés  
[le de le ʒe re pe te ki lʒe te de pri me]
3. Posez vos gros pots d'eau au chaud  
[po ze vo gro po do o ʃo]
4. La grosse rose jaune de gauche est autre chose que la vôtre  
[la gro sro zʒo ndə ʒo ʃe to trə ʃo zke la vo tr]
5. La mule a bu tant qu'elle a pu  
[la my la by tɑ̃ ke la py]
6. Les Papous fouillaient dans la boue  
[le pa pu fu ʒe dɑ̃ la bu]
7. Les boeufs sont un peu près de la meule  
[le bø sɑ̃ tʁɛ pø pre dla mø l]
8. On a vu faire un vœu au fou furieux  
[ɔ̃ na vy fɛ rœ vø o fu fy rʒø]

## VI. VOWEL TENSION

The English habit of diphthongizing vowels (gradually changing the color -- or timbre -- of a vowel in the direction of that of another vowel) is especially noticeable for the vowels [e] and [o]. By comparison, French vowels [e] and [o] are "pure," i. e., they seem to end exactly on the color on which they begin.

In order to produce very pure vowels,

- a) Take the articulatory position of the vowel before starting it.
- b) Tense the muscles of the articulatory organs (lips, tongue, etc.)
- c) Keep the organs immobile in the open position of the vowel until the sound is over.
- d) Begin the vowel progressively (not brusquely as in English), with the minimum required effort (not with the maximum effort at the beginning as in English), and try to increase the effort, the tension and the volume to the end of the vowel.

Test each one of those five methods in turn and find the one that gives the best results with you. The last one is the most important, but the most difficult to apply.

- 1, 2. For vowel [e], accented and unaccented.
- 3, 4. For vowel [o], accented and unaccented. In 3, the vowels are in open syllables. In 4 they are in closed syllables.
- 5-8. These sentences are to combat another kind of diphthongization. The Anglo-American tendency here is to add a slight yod, [j], before rounded vowels [y u ø] when they are preceded by a labial consonant [p b m f v], saying for instance [mjyl] for [myl]. In order to avoid this,

a) Anticipate very firmly the articulatory position of the vowel. That is, take the articulatory position of the vowel even before uttering the consonant.

b) Tense the muscles involved.

5. For the vowel [y].
6. For the vowel [u].
7. For the vowel [ø].
8. For the vowels [y u ø].

## VII. NON-ASPIRATION

A consonant is said to be "aspirate" when a breath of air from the lungs (a sort of h sound) is heard between this consonant and the following vowel. It is the case in English with voiceless plosives



## TENSION GLOTTALE

1. Papa n'a pas pu partir sans parapluie  
[pa pa na pa py pa rti rsã pa ra plui]
2. Ta tentative a été totalement futile  
[ta tã ta ti va e te tɔ ta lmã fy ti l]
3. Quand comptez-vous concourir pour la cocarde  
[kã kɔ te vu kɔ ku ri rpu rla kɔ ka rd]
4. Fais sécher ces chaussures sous le feu  
[fe se fe se fo sy rsu lfø]
5. Babette a fait bombance à bord du bateau de Bob  
[ba bɛ ta fe bɔ bã sa bɔ rdy ba to dbɔ b]
6. Dites à Dédé de dire adieu sans se dandiner  
[di ta de de de di ra djø sã sdã di ne]
7. Gaby garde un goût aigre de vos grogs  
[ga bi ga rdœ gu ɛ grɛ dvo gro g]
8. Son visage est ravagé par la jalousie  
[sɔ vi za ze ra va ze pa rla za lu zi]



[p t k] in initial position: [pha tha kha], and intervocalic position [apha atha akha]; and to a lesser extent with the voiceless fricatives [f s ʃ], in the same positions. The reason for this breath of air is that the vocal cords are still open at the time of the release of the consonant (the brusque mouth opening which precedes the following vowel).

In French, the vocal cords close before the release of the consonant. Thus no breath can pass through when the release occurs, and the vowel immediately follows: not [pha tha kha] but [pa ta ka].

1-4. Listen to sentences 1 to 4 and observe that you hear no breath after consonants. In order to close the vocal cords before the release of the consonant, make a tensing effort in the region of the larynx, as when you say in, out, with a glottal stop, in English: [ʔIn ʔaUt].

1. To practice non-aspirated [p].
2. To practice non-aspirated [t].
3. To practice non-aspirated [k].
4. To practice non-aspirated [f s ʃ]. Aspiration is not so marked for voiceless fricatives [f s ʃ] as for voiceless plosives [p t k], but it does occur noticeably with certain Anglo-Americans.

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Sentences 5-8 concern voiced plosives [b d g] and fricatives [v z ʒ]. These consonants are not subject to aspiration but to a similar retarding of the vocal cords' action: English voicing of these consonants occurs so late that, to a French ear, they often sound voiceless (something like [pa] or [pba] is heard instead of [ba], for instance).

5-8. Observe the rich voicing of consonants. To obtain such voicing, it is necessary to have the vocal cords start vibrating well before the release of the consonant. In practice, produce a vocal "buzz" before the release (vocal cords vibrating with mouth closed and velum raised).

5. To practice voicing [b].
6. To practice voicing [d].
7. To practice voicing [g].
8. To practice voicing [v z ʒ].

## VIII. CONSONANT FRONTING

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Fronting is one of the general characteristics of French articulation, as compared with English. Applied to consonants, it has two distinct features:

a) Either the point of articulation of the consonant itself is regularly fronted (sentences 1-5) as in the case of the eight consonants that use the tip or the blade of the tongue: [t d n l s z ʃ ʒ];

b) or the point of articulation is attracted forward by anticipation of a frontal element in the following vowel (sentences 6-8),

## ANTÉRIORITÉ CONSONANTIQUE

1. Quand nous doutons de tout ton oncle nous donne tort  
[kã nu du tɔ̃ dtu tɔ̃ nɔ̃ klə nu dɔ̃ ntɔ̃ r]
2. Nénette étudie tes deux disques  
[ne nɛ te ty di te dø di sk]
3. Bastide estime que ton système égale celui d'Esther  
[ba sti dɛ sti mkə tɔ̃ si stɛ me ga lsə lɥi dɛ stɛ r]
4. Les voyageurs tâchaient d'agir comme des gens riches  
[lə vwa ja ʒœ rta ʃe da ʒi rko mde ʒã ri ʃ]
5. Alice et Lucile ont lu les livres les plus faciles à lire  
[a li se ly si lɔ̃ ly le li vrə le ply fa si la li r]
6. Les mots doux sonnent faux dans sa bouche  
[lə mo du sɔ̃ nfo dã sa bu ʃ]
7. La nuit réduit le bruit de la pluie sur les tuiles  
[la nɥi re dɥi lbrɥi dla plɥi sy rle tɥi l]
8. Il a troué trois fois du doigt la toile de soie  
[i la tru e trwa fwa dy dwa la twa ldə swa]

Record 3-A

## TENSION CONSONANTIQUE

1. Vous avez caricaturé tous les individus du continent  
[vu za ve ka ri ka ty re tu le zɛ̃ di vi dy dy kɔ̃ ti nã]
2. Sa gentillesse et sa générosité n'ont pas d'égal ici  
[sa ʒã ti ʒɛ se sa ʒe ne rɔ̃ zi te nɔ̃ pa de ga li si]
3. Prends bien pied près de ces grosses pierres grises  
[prã bjɛ̃ pje pre dse gro spjɛ̃ rgri z]

as, for instance, in the case of labial consonants [m b p] before a rounded vowel [y u o ø]: [my], [bo], etc. (Notice that it is not natural for an Anglo-American to anticipate the vowel position in such cases; that is partly why he tends to pronounce [mjy] instead of [my].

1. [n d t] are before back vowels [u ɜ ɔ]: bring the tip of the tongue forward to contact the upper incisors.

2. [n d t] are before front vowels [i e ɛ y ø]: front the tip of the tongue even farther to touch the lower incisors.

3. For [s], firmly contact the tip of the tongue (its upper face) against the lower incisors. For [t] after [s] (estimate), leave the tip against the lower incisors where [s] placed it. The articulation of [t] is then produced by the tip or blade of the tongue rising against the upper incisors.

4. For [ʒ ʃ], bring the tip of the tongue slightly more forward and down than in English: the upper face of the tip hangs down, facing forward, idle, instead of facing the alveols for friction, as it does in English.

5. For every [l], front the tip of the tongue sharply and firmly to contact the upper incisors. In English, it contacts the alveols or the hard palate.

6. Consonants are followed by rounded vowels [o u ɔ]. Take the lip position of those vowels before articulating the consonants that precede them.

7. Consonants are followed by the rounded semi-vowel [ɥ]. Take the lip position of [ɥ] before articulating the preceding consonant.

8. Consonants are followed by the rounded semi-vowel [w]. Take the lip position of [w] before articulating the preceding consonant.

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### Record 3-A

### IX. CONSONANT TENSION

Saying that a French consonant is more tense than an English one means:

- a) That the articulatory muscles are more tense.
- b) That the closing and opening movements are quicker.
- c) That the surface of contact, or friction, is smaller.

For single consonants, it produces a sharper sound (sentences 1-2).

For groups of consonants, it produces, in addition to individual sharpness, a closer union of the consonants in the group (sentences 3-6).

- 1. This sentence comprises mostly single stop consonants.
- 2. Single fricative consonants.
- 3. Groups of consonants ending in [r].

4. Ce couple d'aigles se trouve dans le cadre le plus noble et  
[sə ku plə dɛ glə stru vdã lka drə lply nɔ ble  
le plus sobre  
lply sɔ br]
5. Il palpe avec calme quelques algues pleines de pulpe  
[i lpa lpa vɛ kka lmə kɛ lkə za lgə plɛ ndə py lp]
6. On croirait voir un spectre devant le sépulcre de quartz que  
[ʃ krwa re vwa rɛ spɛ ktrə dvã lse py lkɛ dkwa rtskə  
voile ce cercle d'arbres  
vwa lsə sɛ rklə da rbr]

# ANTÉRIORITÉ VOCALIQUE

1. Cette fillette remet bien vite les mitaines qu'elle a quittées  
[sɛ tfi jɛ trə me bjɛ vi tle mi tɛ nkɛ la ki te]
2. Nous voulons qu'on sorte fort tôt  
[nu vu lɔ kɔ sɔ rtə fɔ rto]
3. Ils veulent un peu de beurre et deux oeufs durs  
[i lvə lɛ pø dbɛ re dø zø dy r]
4. Il vous a tout dit sans rire ni sourire  
[i lvu za tu di sã ri rni su ri r]
5. Dis-tu que tu lis la musique la plus inutile  
[di ty kty li la my zi kla ply zi ny ti l]
6. La blouse que tu as voulue n'a pas du tout plu à tous  
[la blu zkə tɥa vu ly na pa dy tu ply a tu s]

4. Groups of consonants ending in [l].

5. Groups of consonants beginning with [l]. Take care not to vocalize the [l] in such groups. In French the tip of the tongue contacts firmly the upper incisors; there is no loose contact and no retroflexion of the tip. For surest results, apply "open syllabication": try to articulate the [l] entirely in the second syllable: [i-lpa-lpa-vɛ-kka-lmɛ-kɛ-lkɛ-za-lgɛ-plɛ-ndɛ-py-lp].

6. Groups of three consonants or more.

## X. VOWEL FRONTING

The typical, ever-present, frontal resonance of French vowels comes from

(a) strongly arching the tongue, in convex shape, center up, tip down and pressed against the lower incisors; or

(b) strongly rounding and protruding the lips.

There is no French vowel that does not have at least one of those two resonance-fronting features: [i e ɛ ẽ], [y ø œ œ̃] have (a), only [u o ɔ ɔ̃] do not; [u o ɔ ɔ̃], [y ø œ œ̃] have (b), only [i e ɛ ẽ] do not. One series, [y ø œ œ̃], even has both (a) and (b) fronting features. For that reason, it is known as typically French. Contrast this with English where tongue-backing and lip-spreading dominate to the extent that all vowels have one or the other and some have both.

1. This sentence is for front spread vowels [i e ɛ ẽ]. The whole sentence can be said with tongue tip against lower incisors. Cf. (a) above.

2. This sentence is for back rounded vowels [u o ɔ ɔ̃]. The whole sentence can be said with lips rounded and protruded. Cf. (b) above.

3. This sentence is for front rounded vowels [y ø œ œ̃]. Concentrate on both arching the tongue and protruding the lips. This series of vowels is the most "French" because it is fronted both by tongue arching and by lip rounding. There is no such series in English.

4. This sentence, with vowels [i] (front spread) and [u] (back rounded), will afford practice in simultaneous shifts of lips and tongue positions: from maximum tongue-arching and maximum lip-spreading to minimum tongue-arching and minimum lip-spreading (maximum lip-rounding). Observe that, on the records, frontal resonance is maintained throughout the shifts.

5. This sentence, with [i]-[y] contrasts, affords practice in shifting the lip position (from extreme spreading to extreme rounding) without abandoning the extreme arching of the tongue, whose tip remains pressed against the lower incisors throughout.

6. This sentence, with [y]-[u] contrasts, affords practice in shifting the tongue position (from maximum arching to minimum arching) without abandoning the extreme rounding of the lips. The tongue-tip alternately presses against and withdraws from the lower incisors.

1. R FINAL

On part de la gare Saint Lazare pour les ports de la mer du Nord

[ʔ pa r də la ga r sɛ̃ la za r pu r le po r də la mɛ r dy nɔ r]

2. R INTERVOCALIQUE

Nous pourrons nous nourrir de poireaux de carottes et de marrons

[nu pu rʔ nu nu ri rde pwa ro də ka ro te dma rʔ]

## XI. FRICATIVE R

---

The modern French r is a voiced fricative. We shall elaborate on the word "voiced" further on; let us start with the word "fricative."

The point of friction is where the back of the tongue rises and almost touches the back end of the velum (soft palate). This is done with the tongue arched (as much as the neighboring vowels permit) and the tongue-tip lowered toward the lower incisors (or as close to them as the neighboring vowels permit).

The friction between the back of the tongue and the velum is easy to produce if the tongue is arched (tip down, center up). But it is difficult for an Anglo-American to arch the tongue convexly while thinking of an [r] because the Anglo-American r takes the very opposite tongue position: it lowers the tongue-back and raises the tongue-tip in a curled-back position called "retroflex." Thus, in English, the tongue is concave and backed while in French it is convex and fronted. (This is most characteristic of the general difference of place between French and English articulations. Cf. Ch. X.) Therefore, to say a French [r] easily, it is necessary to eliminate the very thought of r, for Anglo-Americans, thinking r, automatically retroflex the tongue. Instead of visualizing the letter r, it will help to substitute some other symbol -- that of the Spanish jota, [x], for instance, since it is similar to the French [r] except for the fact that it is voiceless.

Now, if you have eliminated from your mind all thought of an English r, try a word like "part" in the first sentence: [par]. Hold the [a] sound, mouth wide open, in front of a mirror. See that your tongue is arched with tip against lower incisors. Without losing this position, and while continuing to say [a], raise the back of your tongue slowly until it is close enough to the back of your velum to produce a slightly fricative sound. This sound is a French [r]. If you obtain a [x] (Spanish jota with strong friction) instead of a French [r], it is because you raised your tongue too high and stopped voicing. Repeat, starting from [a], and keep voicing that [a] while raising the tongue only very slightly. If you still obtain a [x], don't worry. You have the correct place of articulation; you only need to voice the sound (vibrate the vocal cords during the friction). (See below).

To learn to voice, compare [s] (voiceless) to [z] (voiced) and practice passing from [s] to [z]. Then practice voicing a [x] in the same manner, and you will obtain a French [r]. As you voice, you will naturally open (widen) the [r] friction-passage a little, as all voiced consonants are more open than the corresponding voiceless ones.

From the first sentence to the sixth, the difficulty increases constantly. You may have to practice for a number of days on sentence 1 before attempting successfully to articulate the [r] sounds in sentence 2; and so on.

1. This sentence is to practice the final[r], first after [a], then after back and front vowels. Follow in slow motion the technique given in the paragraphs above.

2. This sentence is to practice the [r] between vowels. At first, pretend that it is a final [r], as in sentence 1, then have it followed by a vowel.



## 3. R PROCONSONANTIQUE

Pourtant personne n'a servi l'armée avec une telle ferveur  
 [pu rtã pɛ rso nna sɛ rvi la rme a vɛ ky ntɛ lfɛ rvœ r]

## 4. R POSTCONSONANTIQUE

Prends la craie grise et trace trois grands traits très droits  
 [prã la kre gri ze tra strwa grã tre tre drwa]

## 5. R INITIAL

La robe rouge de Rosalie est ravissante  
 [la rɔ b ru ʒdɛ rɔ za li e ra vi sã t]

## 6. R GÉMINÉ

Il acquerra autant de verreries qu'il en désirera  
 [i la kɛ rra o tã dvɛ rri ki lã de zi rra]

## VOYELLES INITIALES ET FINALES

1. Irez-vous à Paris un jeudi

[i re vu a pa ri œ ʒø di]

2. Ouvrez-nous voulez-vous

[u vre nu vu le vu]

3. Essayez d'en acheter

[e se je dã na ʃte]

4. Heureux les gens généreux

[ø rø le ʒã ʒe`ne rø]

5. Envoyez-en à tous les gens

[ã vwa je zã a tu le ʒã]

3. This sentence is for [r] before a consonant. Try to apply "open syllabication": [pu--rtā pe--rsō nna se--rvi la--rme a ve ky nte lfc--rve r].

4. This sentence is for [r] after a consonant. If it is too difficult, return for a few days to sentences 1 and 2. You must come to the point where the consonant and the [r] that follows are very closely united, but at first you may have to articulate them almost successively. -- The arched position of the tongue (necessary for [r]) is easy to take with [p b k g] preceding the [r], but it takes special care with [t d] preceding the [r]. For the English articulation of [t d] the tongue-tip is curled up to the alveols or palate; this prevents arching the tongue. If you articulate French [t d] with tongue-tip down against lower incisors, the arched position of the tongue will be taken in advance and the [r] will be easily articulated.

5. This sentence is for initial [r]. This is the crucial test. [r] must be voiced from the beginning: in slow motion practice, raise the back of your tongue, with tip down, and produce a vocal "buzz" (see Chapter VII, sentences 5-8) before starting the friction.

6. This sentence is for twin r [rr]. It is not articulated as a single long [r] but really as two successive [r] sounds separated by a perceptible reduction in muscular tension.

## XII. INITIAL AND FINAL VOWEL

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The five sentences of this exercise begin with a vowel and end with one.

As a rule, French articulation does not produce a glottal stop [ʔ] before the initial vowel of a word, as English articulation does. Hence the necessity of practising French words that begin with a vowel.

The glottal stop [ʔ] is produced when a complete closure of the vocal cords precedes a vowel: when the vocal cords separate to start vibrating, the pressure of breath accumulated behind them causes an explosive sound to occur -- the glottal stop. Cf. English in, out, ouch [ʔIn], [ʔaUt], [ʔaUtʃ]. In French, for an initial vowel, the vocal cords are not closed before entering into vibration; as they come together from an open position, they start vibrating as soon as they are drawn close enough together to permit it. In other words, in producing the French initial vowel, the transition is smooth and almost imperceptible from breath expiration to vibration of the vocal cords.

1-5. Observe the progressive way in which the initial vowel begins on the record's five sentences. To produce the same quality exhale slightly before sounding the vowel.

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1-5. With an ending vowel, exactly the opposite occurs. While English tapers off progressively, French ends in an abrupt contraction of the glottis (vocal cords). Observe the sharp vowel endings on the same five sentences.

## DETENTE

1. Qui veut venir en ville  
[ki vø vni rã vi l"]
2. On parle d'un vol  
[ɔ pa rlə dã vø l"]
3. Vous en faites une mine  
[vu zã fɛ ty nmi n"]
4. Elle n'est pas très bonne  
[ɛ lne pa tre bɔ n"]
5. Faut-il qu'il l'aime  
[fo ti lki llɛ m"]
6. C'est un tout autre homme  
[se tã tu to tro m"]
7. Vous êtes un peu vague  
[vu zɛ tã pø va g"]
8. Peut-on se mettre à l'aise  
[pø tɔ smɛ tra lɛ z"]
9. C'est de la bonne musique  
[se dla bɔ nmy ʒi k"]
10. Est-ce qu'il a des griffes  
[ɛ ski la de gri f"]
11. C'est caché dans le sable  
[se ka ʃe dã lsa bl"]
12. Ils font un beau couple  
[i lfɔ tã bɔ ku pl"]

## XIII. CONSONANT RELEASE

French final consonants differ from the English ones in two main respects. Firstly, like all other consonants, they are not anticipated as much as in English: [fi--l], not [filll]. Secondly, they conclude in a release: a sharp reopening of the mouth, followed by a slight vowel sound (which we shall note with the symbol [˘]): [fi--l˘]; while in English, as a rule, final consonants end on their mouth-closing phase, without reopening of the mouth or any trace of a subsequent vowel.

The final consonants whose release offers the greatest difficulty are [l n m], that is why half of all the sentences of this chapter drill on those three consonants.

1. This sentence is for final [l] after a front vowel. Apply open syllabication to separate the preceding vowel from the final consonant; that is, keep the tip of the tongue down until the vowel is ended, then raise it sharply and briefly up to the upper incisors. Contact of the tongue-tip with the teeth is immediately followed by reopening: downward withdrawal of the tongue-tip. Caution: the withdrawal is downward, not inward, and the reopening is sharp but not wide if the vowel sound to be heard is to resemble a French [ə].

2. This sentence is for final [l] after a back vowel. Same as above. Besides, do not forget fronting of the tongue: it does not draw back to the alveols, as in English, but goes forward to the upper incisors, just as for initial [l].

3. Final [n] after a front vowel. Same procedure as in (1) above.

4. Final [n] after a back vowel. Same procedure as in (2) above.

5. Final [m] after a front vowel.

6. Final [m] after a back vowel.

7-8. For voiced consonants in general. Observe that the release is still followed by a slight vowel sound.

9-10. For voiceless consonants in general. The release takes place, but observe that the slight vowel sound that is heard is a whispered one.

11. For voiced consonant-groups in general. A slight vowel sound is heard after the release.

12. For voiceless consonant-groups in general. The slight vowel sound after the release is only a whispered one. (The [l] has been unvoiced by the influence of the voiceless [p].)

## SEMI-VOYELLES

1. A la radio le pianiste a patiemment répondu aux questions  
 [a la radjo lpja ni sta pa sja mǎ re pǝ dy o kǝ stjǝ  
 essentielles  
 ze sǎ sjǝ l]
2. Voilà trois mois qu'il boit moins que toi  
 [vwa la trwa mwa ki lbwa mwě ktwa]
3. Sa lampe a huile a lui toute la nuit sous les tuiles  
 [sa lǎ pa ɥi la lɥi tu tla nɥi su le tɥi l]
4. Si vous vendiez cher vous vendriez moins  
 [si vu vǎ dje ʃǝ rvu vǎ dri je mwě]
5. Si nous nous couvrions nous nous mouillerions moins  
 [si nu nu ku vri jǝ nu nu mu jǝ rjǝ mwě]
6. Janvier et février sont les premiers mois du calendrier  
 [ʒǎ vje e fe vri je sǝ le prǝ mje mwa dy ka lǎ dri je]
7. Les papiers de la bibliothèque sont à trier en entier  
 [le pa pje dla bi bli jo tǝ ksǝ ta tri je ǎ nǎ tje]
8. Priez-les d'envoyer du sanglier à tous nos employés  
 [pri je le dǎ vwa je dy sǎ gli je a tu no zǎ plwa je]

#### XIV. SEMI-VOWEL

French has three semi-vowels: [j], [w], and [ɥ] -- one more than English. Examples: pied [pje], poids [pwa], puis [puɪ]. Anglo-Americans must study the two following aspects of their articulations:

a. Semi-vowels do not alter the rhythmic pattern of French.

Wherever they appear, they are always short enough to be entirely articulated in the syllable of the following vowel: hier [jer], pied [pje], plier [pli-je]. They do not tend to straddle two syllables as, for instance, in the English word radio which is neither [re-djo] nor [re-di-o] nor [re-di-jo] and has some aspect of these three stages. Thus, the Anglo-American tendency is to pronounce the i in pied and the i in plier almost identically, giving to pied more than one syllable (too much like [pi-je]) and to plier less than two syllables (too much like [plje]).

b. The i of the spelling is either pronounced as a semi-vowel [j]: pied [pje], vendions [vɑ̃-djɔ̃], or remains a vowel and splits the syllable: plier [pli-je], vendriens [vɑ̃-dri-jɔ̃], with appearance of the semi-vowel [j] in the second syllable of the split. These two behaviors depend on the number of consonants (consonant sounds) that precede the i (one in pied, vendions; two in plier, vendriens). They are explained by the Law of Three Consonants, which may be stated as follows if we count the semi-vowel as a consonant: Two contiguous consonants in the same syllable are easy to articulate: [pje]; three are not: hence, not [plje] but [pli-je].

The same Law of Three Consonants applies to the semi-vowels [w] and [ɥ]: on loua [ɔ̃-lwa], on cloua [ɔ̃ klu-a]; la tuile [la-tuil], la truëlle [la-try-ɛl]. But here the appearance of the semi-vowel in the second syllable of the split is so light that it may be neglected. Attention needs only be paid to the clear separation of syllables between vowels: [klu--a], [try--ɛl].

Note that [w] and [ɥ] each present a large category of exceptions to the Law of Three Consonants:

Exception for [w]: Three consonants in the same syllable are possible before the sound [a] of the spelling oi [wa]: trois [trwa] croix [krwa], froid [frwa], etc.

Exception for [ɥ]: Three consonants in the same syllable are possible before the sound [i]: pluie [plɥi], bruit [bɥi], fruit [fɥi], etc.

1. This sentence is for semi-vowel [j]. Observe the shortness of the [j]: not [ra-di-o], but clearly [ra-djo].

2. This sentence is for semi-vowel [w].

3. This sentence is for semi-vowel [ɥ].

4-8. In these sentences, the law of three consonants decides whether the i is pronounced as in vendiez or as in vendriez. (Observe very strictly the syllabic rhythm of the record throughout these eight sentences.)



## ENCHAÎNEMENT VERBAL

1. Mes élèves espèrent apprendre à lire en une année  
[me ze lɛ vɛ spɛ ra prã dra li rã ny na ne]
2. Vous êtes encore avec elle à l'école anglaise  
[vu zɛ tã kɔ ra vɛ kɛ la le kɔ lã glɛ z]
3. Cette bonne grosse chatte grise mange toutes les souris  
[sɛ tboŋ gro s/a tgrɪ zmã ʒtu tle su ri]
4. Quelles espèces de blouses veulent-elles porter  
[kɛ lɛ spɛ sdə blu zvɛ ltɛ lpɔ rte]
5. Va à Arles et achète un hareng à Alice  
[va a a rle a ʃɛ tɔ̃ a rã a a li s]
6. Henri a eu à en hâter la conclusion  
[ã ri a y a ã a te la kɔ̃ kly zjɔ̃]
7. Pourquoi ne faut-il pas trop nourrir un nain  
[pu rkwa nfo ti lpa tro nu ri rɔ̃ nɛ]
8. Parce qu'on risque d'en faire un ingrat  
[pa rskɔ̃ ri skə dɔ̃ fɛ rɔ̃ nɛ gra]

## XV. WORD LINKING

There is a strong tendency in English to cut out the words in a sentence, to delimit them, to individualize them: an aim does not sound the same as a name. This is not the case in French, where the syllabic pattern of "open syllables" dominates even at the cost of words losing their identity in the course of the spoken chain of syllables. This makes French hard to understand, orally, but it is an essential part of French pronunciation in connected discourse, and it must be imitated. (An example of this can be heard in sentences 7 and 8, where a pun is made by the fact that un nain gras and un ingrat sound so nearly alike. French probably lends itself to this type of punning better than any other language.)

The records study three types of word-juncture:

a. **Consonant-Vowel:** a word ending with a consonant sound links with a word beginning with a vowel sound: tout irrité, toute irritée.

b. **Consonant-Consonant:** a word ending with a consonant sound links with a word beginning with a consonant sound: toute simple.

c. **Vowel-Vowel:** a word ending with a vowel sound links with a word beginning with a vowel sound: tout haineux.

1-2. These sentences are packed with consonant-vowel junctures, either by "liaison" (mes élèves [mezɛlɛv]) or by "linking" (une année [ynanɛ]). Observe that all syllables end in vowels, whether the words do or not, so that the transcription looks like this: [me-ze-lɛ-vɛ-spɛ-ra-prɑ̃-dra-li-rɑ̃-ny-na-ne], [vu-zɛ-tɑ̃-kɔ-ra-vɛ-kɛ-la-le-kɔ-lɑ̃-glɛz].

It is typical of French to begin syllables with a consonant and end them with a vowel. To this characteristic of ending syllables with vowels, French owes a certain musical quality that is found in no other language to the same degree, although many languages have a larger proportion of vowels than French has.

3-4. These sentences are packed with cases of consonant-consonant juncture. Again, it shows the French tendency to end syllables with a vowel. Observe that the last consonant of each word is practically uttered with the first consonant of the following word, so that the transcription could almost look like this: [sɛ-tbo-ngro-s/a-tgri---zmɑ̃-ʒtu-tle-su-ri], [kɛ-lzɛ-spɛ-sdɛ-blɛ-zvɛ-ltɛ-lpɔ-rte]. In slow motion, practice exactly that way.

5-6. These sentences offer cases of vowel-vowel juncture. Observe that no glottal stops are used between vowels, that the voice is not interrupted but only the tension reduced. Contrast the staccato series of glottal stops in the English: Ab ate an egg at eight.

7-8. These sentences simply offer an example of the sort of pun that word linking can cause in French. For all practical purposes, un nain gras and un ingrat sound alike. (Actually, muscular tension for the [n] increases more rapidly in the first phrase than in the second. This shows with the help of instruments in a phonetics laboratory.)

## TIMBRE DES VOYELLES

## XVI. VOWEL COLOR

By vowel "color" is meant that vowel feature which acoustically distinguishes [a] from [i], [e] from [o], sit from sat, etc. It is also known as vowel "quality" or "timbre." But both "timbre" and "quality" have other connotations. In order to avoid all confusion, we shall use here the newer term: vowel "color."

We do not wish to dismiss vowel color as unimportant in good pronunciation, but we do point out the fact that it is only one of the many phonetic features of a language. Phonetic manuals have often given to it the majority of their pages. Here we consider it as only one of seventeen chapters of French pronunciation, and that more or less measures its importance. In fact, of the seventeen features of French pronunciation treated here, vowel color is the one that presents the greatest amount of accepted variations. For example, no two French natives, no two regions of Northern France use the same [a] color, yet they all without exception have in common: tension, fronting, non-nasalizing of orals, non-aspiration of stops, certain features of accent, of rhythm, of intonation, etc., etc. Good French pronunciation should certainly depend first of all on those phonetic features that all Northern Frenchmen have in common.

For practicing vowel color, the best advice is to avoid all thought of so-called English equivalents or English nearest sounds. (No French speech-sound is exactly the same as any English speech-sound; and proceeding by modification of an English sound to get the French one is just beating around the bush.) Simply listen to the same French sentences, day after day, until you recognize for each vowel its unique ring, without any thought of similar sounds in other languages. Then, imitate.

To judge the quality of your imitation, listen to your own voice with the same high degree of attention as when you listen to the records. But do not rely only on direct hearing of your voice; record your imitations on a disk or magnetic wire or tape. Comparison of this recording with the original record will give you a much more objective indication of your degree of accurateness than hearing your own voice while you talk.

No organic description of the vowels need be given here since the students are already familiar with the elements of French pronunciation. (We are concerned here with "advanced" training.) Beside, for the final tuning of vowel color you must rely on the acuteness of your ear. Organic impressions, such as "a very slight backing or raising of the tongue" are neither accurate nor generally dependable. They can indeed be very deceptive, illusory impressions. In the end, your best guide to organic corrections is your ear. Train yourself to use it with greater and greater efficacy. If you tend to put your faith in organic descriptions of vowels as a practical help, just consider that there are in French at least seven degrees of tongue lowering-raising, ten degrees of tongue fronting-backing, ten degrees of lip rounding-spreading to master, and try to take the position of one of them before sounding the vowel you have in mind; consider that every vowel combines one degree from each of those three sets; consider that even if you had enough kinesthetic acuteness to assemble exactly the four given degrees of a certain vowel, you might not obtain the correct sound because of possible deviations of other organic features than the

TIMBRE DES VOYELLES

1. Voici l'étourdi qui parie qu'il aura fini sa chimie à midi  
[vwa si le tu rdi ki pa ri ki lɔ ra fi ni sa ʃi mi a mi di]
2. La cousine qu'il visite habite vis-à-vis de l'île  
[la ku zi nki lvi zi ta bi tvi za vi dli l]
3. La timidité de Virginie lui rendit la vie difficile  
[la ti mi di te dvi rʒi ni lɥi rã di la vi di fi si l]
4. Ce goulou a voulu tout ce qu'il a vu sur le menu  
[sɛ gu ly a vu ly tu ski la vy sy rlɛ mny]
5. La mule du juge bute contre le mur  
[la my ldy ʒy ʒby tkɔ̃ trɛ lmy r]
6. Le mur murant Namur rend Namur murmurant  
[lɛ my rmy rã na my rrã na my rmy rmy rã]
7. Ce filou cache tous ses sous dans un trou  
[sɛ fi lu ka ʃtu se su dã zɛ̃ tru]
8. Les troupes sont en route depuis douze jours  
[le tru psɔ̃ tã ru tdɛ pɥi du zɥu r]
9. Pouvez-vous toujours trouver ce que vous voulez  
[pu ve vu tu ʒu rtru ve skɛ vu vu le]



three named above, especially the ones governed by involuntary muscles (those that control the velum, for instance); consider that, inversely, organic deviations may produce such compensations in the resonance cavities that a correct sound may be obtained with organic positions considerably different from the ones that are normally required; consider that the deaf-mutes, who rely only on articulatory indications, can produce only very approximate sounds after years of training and in spite of their highly developed kinesthetic sense; and you will realize the near futility of organic descriptions for practical purposes.

On the other hand, as you perfect vowel color, keep constantly in mind the main vowel features that you have practiced on the previous records:

- a. Tenseness of all organs of articulation, for unaccented vowels as well as for accented ones. It will help you to reach the extreme positions of lip spreading and rounding, tongue fronting and backing, that are characteristic of French.
- b. Tongue arching convexly (center up, tip down) to the maximum possible for each vowel.
- c. Increasing effort: do not attack the vowel brusquely, as in English, but progressively; and do not reduce the tension but increase it until the end of the vowel.
- d. Open syllabication: keep your mouth open until the end of the vowel; do not anticipate the following consonant, if there is one.
- e. Vowel anticipation: anticipate the articulatory position of the vowel when you start the preceding consonant.
- f. Single tone: do not change the note of your voice during a vowel but only between vowels (or between syllables).
- g. Oral pureness: take care not to nasalize oral vowels, especially when a nasal consonant follows.

#### A. The Oral Vowels

1. i [i] in syllables that are accented (final) and open (ending in a vowel sound).
2. i [i] in syllables that are accented and closed (ending in a consonant sound).
3. i [i] in syllables that are unaccented (all syllables but the last in each group). Special care must be taken not to relax the muscles of articulation for fear that the unaccented [i] should take the color of English [ɪ] of sit [sɪt].
4. u [y] in accented open syllables.
5. u [y] in accented closed syllables.
6. u [y] in unaccented syllables.
7. ou [u] in accented open syllables.
8. ou [u] in accented closed syllables.
9. ou [u] in unaccented syllables. Special care must be taken not to relax the muscles of articulation for fear that the unaccented [u] should take the color of English [ʊ] of book [bʊk].



10. Laissez l'aîné des bébés chez les Leger cet été  
[le se le ne de be be ʃe le le ʒe se te te]
11. Préférez-vous vraiment les théières légères  
[pre fe re vu vre mǎ le te ʒe rle ʒe r]
12. Cette bergère mène ses chèvres derrière la ferme  
[se tbe rʒe rme nse ʃe vre de rʒe rla fe rm]
13. Il a servi la septième section à la perfection  
[i la se rvi la se tʒe mse ksʒɔ̃ a la pe rfe ksʒɔ̃]
14. Elle préfère aller chercher son dessert chez elle  
[e lpre fe ra le ʃe rʃe sɔ̃ de se rʃe ze l]
15. Hélène déteste rester ferme avec ses élèves  
[e le nde te stə re ste fe rma ve kse ze le v]
16. L'aveu du vieux malheureux m'émeut assez peu  
[la vø dy vʒø ma lø rø me mø ta se pø]
17. Votre fameuse meule est un peu poreuse  
[vo tre fa mø zmø le tǽ pø po rø z]
18. Il pleuvait tous les deuxièmes jeudis du mois  
[i lplø ve tu le dø zʒe mʒø di dy mwa]
19. Cette jeune veuve en deuil demeure toute seule  
[se tʒæ nvæ vǎ də jdə mæ rtu tsæ l]
20. Veuillez heurter seulement pour ne pas les apeurer  
[vø je æ rte sœ lmǎ pu rnə pa le za pœ re]
21. Ce peureux pleure de peur depuis deux heures  
[sə pø rø plæ rdə pœ rdə pɥi dø zœ r]
22. Ils ne peuvent mieux dire adieu à leurs deux soeurs  
[i lne pœ vmjø di ra djø a læ rdø sœ r]

10. Close e [e] in accented open syllables. In French there is no close e in closed syllable. Normally, by the law of syllabic structure (better known under the name of "loi de position"), close e is found only in open syllable (sentences 10-11) and open e [ɛ] only in closed syllable (sentences 12-13). The law of syllabic structure expresses the following tendency: in open syllable, close vowel: j'ai [ʒe], peut [pø], sot [so]; in closed syllable, open vowel: j'aime [ʒɛm], peuvent [pœv], sotte [sɔt]. It is perhaps more clearly shown by joining the examples in contrasting pairs: [ʒe]-[ʒɛm], [pø]-[pœv], [so]-[sɔt].

Note: By "normally" we mean: in the most unaffected speech of the most cultivated people.

Note: By "close e" we mean any e color that is nearer to very close e than to very open e; it may be said to vary from very close to mid-close. Similarly, by "open e" we mean any shade of e color that is nearer to very open e than to very close e.

11. Close e [e] in unaccented syllables.

12. Open e [ɛ] in accented closed syllables. Normal, natural French does not have a really open e in open syllables; when it occurs it is generally an affectation. For instance, it would sound perfectly dated to use an actual open e in the last syllables of "C'était en effet un Anglais qui parlait en gourmet." To sound unaffected, to-day, such e endings vary from very close to mid-close, but remain within the margin of variations of the close e category. Pedantic "instituteurs" often try to teach their pupils to open final ais, ait, et. But they do not do it themselves in normal unaffected conversation and they have no success in making others do it naturally because it goes contrary to the physiological law of syllabic structure (mentioned above in 10): in open syllable, close vowel; in closed syllable, open vowel: j'ai, j'aime; peut, peuvent; sot, sotte.

13. Open e [ɛ] in unaccented syllables.

14-15. Close e [e] and open e [ɛ] in contrasting succession.

16. Close eu [ø] in accented open syllables.

17. Close eu [ø] in accented closed syllables. This is a sentence of exceptions to the law of syllabic structure. Normally, close eu is found in open syllables (sentences 16, 18) and open eu [œ] in closed syllables (sentences 19, 20). Exceptions are: all words in -euse, and a few others like meule, meute, neutre, fentre [-øz møl mœt nœtr fœtr].

18. Close eu [ø] in unaccented syllables. It is not invariably close. In many words it can be either close or open: Europe, heureuse, jeunesse, peut-être; and it is often open by analogy with a root word: veuillez, apeurer (sentence 20).

19. Open eu [œ] in accented closed syllables. (It presents special articulatory difficulty before [l] and [n]: seule, jeune. If [l] or [n] are anticipated, the [œ] color is distorted.) Note that accented open eu always obeys the law of syllabic structure: it is never found in open syllables, not even by affectation.

20. Open eu [œ] in unaccented syllables.

21-22. Close eu [ø] and open eu [œ] in contrasting succession.

23. Posez vos gros pots d'eau au chaud

Record 4-A

[po ze vo gro po do o so]

24. La grosse rose jaune de gauche est autre chose que la vôtre

[la gro sro z3o nde go se to tre so zke la vo tr]

25. Il a sursauté quand le chat miaulant l'a frôlé

[i la sy rso te kã lsa mjo lã la fro le]

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Record 4-B

26. On sort du corridor de la Sorbonne qui donne sur la rue des  
Ecoles par la porte du Nord  
[3 so rdy ko ri do rde la so rbo nki do nsy rla ry de

27. La monotonie du professeur de philosophie est trop connue  
ze ko lpa rla po rte dy no r]

[la mo no to ni dy pro fe sæ rde fi lo zo fi e tro ko ny]

28. Notre grosse brosse ne vaut pas trop gros

[no tre gro sbro sne vo pa tro gro]

29. Il faut emporter cette auto au port de Bordeaux

[i lfo tã po rte se to to o po rde bo rdo]

30. Voilà pourquoi le tabac n'ira pas à François

[vwa la pu rkwa lta ba ni ra pa a frã swa]

31. La malade avale sa tisane froide

[la ma la da va lsa ti za nfrwa d]

32. Le papa de ma camarade a passé par l'Alabama

[lpa pa dma ka ma ra da pa se pa rla la ba ma]

33. Jacques est las des tâches qui gâtent l'âme

[3a ke la de ta ski ga tla m]

34. On blâme Jeanne de ce que la pâte est infâme

[3 bla m3a nde skæ la pa te tẽ fa m]

35. Tâchez de ne pas la blâmer d'avoir gâté les pâtés

[ta se de npa la bla me da vwa rga te le pa te]

23. Close o [o] in accented open syllables. (o is always close in accented open syllables, in complete agreement with the law of syllabic structure.)

24. Close o [o] in accented closed syllables. This is a sentence of exceptions to the law of syllabic structure. Normally, close o is found in accented open syllables (sentence 23), and open o [ɔ] in accented closed syllables (sentence 26): sot, sotte. Exceptions are: all words ending in -ose [oz]; most spellings in au and ô: faute [fot], hôte [ot]; and a few other words like zone [zon], grosse [gros].

25. Close o [o] in unaccented syllables. This is a sentence of exceptions (but not to the law of syllabic structure, this time). Generally, unaccented o is open (as in sentence 27), contrary to the law of syllabic structure. (This is, by the way, the only general case that is contrary to it.) Exceptions such as the ones of this sentence 25 are mostly found in derivatives whose rootword have a close o, as in sentence 24. For instance: oser [oze], position [pozisjɔ̃], gaucher [goʃe], enrôler [ɑ̃role].

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#### Record 4-B

26. Open o [ɔ] in accented closed syllables. (It presents special articulatory difficulty before [l] and [n]: école, donne, Sorbonne; if [l] or [n] is anticipated, the open o [ɔ] color is distorted.) Note that accented open o always obeys the law of syllabic structure: it is never found in open syllables, not even by affectation.

27. Open o [ɔ] in unaccented syllables. This offers the only general exception to the law of syllabic structure: it is the only category of vowels that does not obey the law in a general way: unaccented o is generally open, in open syllables as well as in closed syllables: borné, bonnet [bɔ̃r-ne], [bɔ̃-ne]; mosquée, moqué [mɔs-ke], [mɔ-ke]; porté, potée [pɔr-te], [pɔ-te]. (Remember that unaccented e and eu do follow the law of syllabic structure: respecta, répéta [res-pɛk-ta], [re-pe-ta]; meurtri, jeudi [mœr-tri], [ʒœ-di].)

28-29. Close o [o] and open o [ɔ] in contrasting succession.

30. Front or central a [a] in accented open syllables.

31. Front or central a [a] in accented closed syllables.

32. Front or central a [a] in unaccented syllables.

33. Back or central a [a] in accented open syllables.

34. Back or central a [a] in accented closed syllables.

35. Back or central a [a] in unaccented syllables.

Note: This seems to be the present situation of a in modern French (in "the most unaffected speech of the most cultivated people"):

a. The distinction between front a [a] and back a [ɑ] is fast disappearing in the present generation.

b. A somewhat central a is coming to be used for all purposes.

c. This central a may vary considerably from front to back, giving it a wider range of color variations than any other vowel.

36. La fin de l'examen vient bien à point

Record 4-B

[la fẽ dle gza mẽ vjẽ bjẽ na pwẽ]

37. C'est le singe du prince qui grimpe tout à la pointe

[se lsẽ 3dy prẽ ski grẽ ptu ta la pwẽ t]

38. Quelle intimité sympathique il maintient

[ke lẽ ti mi te sẽ pa ti ki lmẽ tjẽ]

39. Tout parfum n'est pas opportun pour chacun

[tu pa rfẽ ne pa zo po rtẽ pu rʃa kẽ]

40. Il emprunte cet air humble à sa pauvre défunte

[i lã prẽ tse te rẽ bla sa po vre de fã t]

41. J'en emprunterai un autre lundi [3ã nã prẽ tre ã no tre lã di]

42. C'est au son du clairon que nous prendrons le bastion

[se to sã dy kle rẽ knu prã drẽ lba stjõ]

43. On prononce à la ronde assis à l'ombre

[õ pro nã sa la rẽ da si za lõ br]

44. Montons nous plonger dans la profondeur d'une fontaine

[mõ tõ nu plõ 3e dã la pro fõ dæ rdy nfõ te n]

45. J'entends de temps en temps des chants d'enfants

[3ã tã de tã zã tã de ʃã dã fã]

46. Il semble qu'il pense à prendre sa revanche

[i lsã blẽ ki lpã sa prã dre sa rvã ʃ]

47. Bien qu'endurci il avançait vers l'enquêteur en tremblant

[bjẽ kã dy rsi i la vã se ve rlã ke tæ rã trã blã]

48. J'ai acheté un bon pain blanc qui pèse onze cent vingt et un grammes

[3e a ʃte ã bõ pẽ blã ki pe zõ zã vẽ te ã gra m]

49. Qu'elle a l'air humble cette grande blonde mince

[ke la le rẽ blẽ se tgrã dblõ dmẽ s]

50. Ce mondain a l'intention d'emprunter à chacun

[smõ dẽ a lẽ tã sjõ dã prẽ te a ʃa kẽ]

## B. The Nasal Vowels

Just as we recommended that you eliminate all thought of English equivalents while studying French oral vowels, so we now recommend that you eliminate all thought of French oral equivalents when studying French nasal vowels. Listen to the nasal vowels until you can readily recognize their individual ring. Then, imitate them. Your ear will be your best guide.

36. in [ɛ̃] in accented open syllables.
37. in [ɛ̃] in accented closed syllables.
38. in [ɛ̃] in unaccented syllables.
39. un [œ̃] in accented open syllables.
40. un [œ̃] in accented closed syllables.
41. un [œ̃] in unaccented syllables.
42. on [ɔ̃] in accented open syllables.
43. on [ɔ̃] in accented closed syllables.
44. on [ɔ̃] in unaccented syllables.
45. an [ɑ̃] in accented open syllables.
46. an [ɑ̃] in accented closed syllables.
47. an [ɑ̃] in unaccented syllables.
48. in, un, on, an in accented open syllables.
49. in, un, on, an in accented closed syllables.
50. in, un, on, an in unaccented syllables.

## XVII. UNSTABLE E [ə]

Unstable e [ə] has approximately the same vowel color as open eu [œ] of jeune, soeur, but, unlike open eu, it is not stable: it can often be dropped out of the pronunciation entirely; whence the term "unstable." Naturally, the dropping -- or retaining -- of [ə] is not done at random; it is governed by definite laws, as we shall soon see.

In the one hundred exercises of this record, we shall practice dropping the [ə] as it is usually done by cultivated people in natural conversation. But note that under special circumstances, such as very slow or emphatic speech, some of those [ə]'s could be retained.

The main law that governs the dropping or retaining of [ə] is very simple. It is a branch of the law of three consonants: the articulation of three contiguous consonants in the same syllable is difficult and therefore avoided in normal speech. However, dropping the [ə] does not depend on the number of consonants that follow it, but essentially on the number of consonants that precede



E INSTABLE

1. Un peu ~~dé~~ lait --- Un bol de lait
2. Un chien ~~dé~~ chasse --- Un cor de chasse
3. Un bout ~~dé~~ cigare --- Une boîte de cigares
4. Sans ~~qué~~ vous ~~le~~ sachiez --- Pour que vous ~~le~~ sachiez
5. Tu ~~né~~ sais pas --- Il ne sait pas
6. Va ~~lé~~ faire --- Passe le faire
7. Des oeufs ~~dé~~ poule --- Un oeuf de poule
8. Un valet ~~dé~~ chambre --- Une femme de chambre
9. Tu ~~lé~~ prends --- Il le prend
10. Tu ~~lé~~ blâmes --- Il le blâme
11. Il veut ~~lé~~ croire --- Il désire le croire
12. Un matin ~~dé~~ pluie --- Un jour de pluie
13. Il se souvient ~~dé~~ vous --- Il ne se souvient de rien
14. En ~~cé~~ moment --- En ce lieu
15. Question ~~dé~~ couleur --- Question de style

it. In other words, the consonants that follow the [ə] always count as one. (A different way of treating the case of the consonants that follow the [ə] is to state that after the [ə], liquids ([l], [r]) and semi-vowels ([j], [w], [ɥ]) do not count. This statement is based on the fact that the second and third consonants, when they occur, are mostly liquids and semi-vowels: pas de chien [padʃjɛ̃], pas de croix [padkrwa], pas de pluie [padplɥi].)

LAW: [ə], followed by one consonant or more, is dropped when it is preceded by only one consonant; but is retained when it is preceded by two or more: samedi [samdi], but vendredi [vɑ̃dredi].

Now, there are a number of small exceptions to this law, and we shall mention them as we meet them in the list of recorded examples. The fact that we mention them all makes them look much more important than they really are, quantitatively.

Many people, some with a considerable knowledge of French, find these phrases difficult to master. The reason is that they acquired wrong oral habits of [ə] in their first years or months of studying French, and those habits have taken deep root. Another reason is our unfortunate eternal preoccupation with the written language as opposed to its oral reality. Written French will more often lead into error than not, where [ə] is concerned.

RHYTHM and OPEN SYLLABICATION. While repeating the phrases of the record, observe the rhythm very strictly. Beating time with your hand on your lap (one beat for each syllable) will help. Rhythm should be as regular as if you were counting: 1-2-3----1-2-3-4, un-peu-d'lait----un-bo-lde-lait. Besides, it is indispensable to apply open syllabication (ending syllables with vowels, and not anticipating the following consonants): the reason French retains the [ə] in un bol de lait is that it articulates most of the [l] of bol in the third syllable: [ɑ̃-bo-lde-le]; otherwise there would be only one consonant before the [ə] in the same syllable, and that would certainly cause this [ə] to drop. So, remember throughout these exercises to apply rhythm and open syllabication.

1-15. These sentences are examples of the play of unstable e in the nine monosyllables: que, te, de, me, ne, le, ce, se, je, when they are inside of the sentence (not initial of the sentence). Our phrases are presented in contrasting pairs: in the first phrases, the [ə] drops because it is only preceded by one consonant sound: un peu d'lait, un chien d'chasse, un bout d'cigare; in the second phrases, the [ə] remains because it is preceded by two consonant sounds: un bol de lait, un cor de chasse, une boit' de cigares, [ɑ̃ bo lde le], [ɑ̃ ko rde ʃas], [y nbwa tde si gar].

1-8. [ə] is followed by one consonant.

9-10. [ə] is followed by two consonants, to show that the number of consonants that follow the [ə] is generally irrelevant.

11-12. [ə] is followed by three consonants (two consonants plus a semi-vowel) to show further the same as above.

13-14. Two exceptions to the irrelevance of the number of consonants that follow. Let us call them the "r plus yod [j]" and the "l plus yod" exceptions: et de rien [e də ʀjɛ̃], [ɑ̃ sɑ lɥø]. When either of these two consonant groups follow [ə], the [ə] is retained, even if only one consonant precedes.

15. Another exception to the irrelevance of the number of conso-

16. Une ~~grand~~ femme --- Une pauvre femme
17. Treiz~~e~~ passagers --- Quatorze passagers
18. Une ~~gross~~ plume --- Une énorme plume
19. Une ~~bonne~~ brise --- Une agréable brise
20. Une ~~visit~~e stupide --- Une lettre stupide
21. Une ~~spécialité~~ --- Notre spécialité
22. Cett~~e~~ croix --- Votre croix
23. Les bell~~es~~ truites --- Les pauvres truites
24. Une ~~vill~~e splendide --- Une montre splendide
25. Ils val~~ent~~ beaucoup --- Ils ne valent rien
26. Sam~~é~~di --- Vendredi
27. Seul~~é~~ment --- Simplement
28. Buch~~é~~ron --- Forgeron
29. Vous pass~~é~~rez --- Vous entrerez
30. Nous caus~~é~~rons --- Nous causerions
31. Rich~~é~~pin --- Richelieu
32. Ses gu~~é~~nilles --- Au grenier
33. Sa r~~é~~vue --- Son brevet
34. Un p~~é~~tit --- une petite
35. La f~~é~~nêtre --- Une fenêtre
36. La ch~~é~~minée --- Une cheminée
37. Deux s~~é~~condes --- Une seconde
38. Il veut v~~é~~nir --- Ils veulent venir
39. Vous d~~é~~mandez --- Vous ne demandez pas
40. Vous s~~é~~rez --- Vous ne serez pas
41. Nous s~~é~~rons bien --- Nous serions bien
42. Vous g~~é~~lez --- Vous geliez
43. J'~~é~~ pourrai vous le donner
44. J'~~é~~ n'ai pas compris
45. J'~~é~~ vous remercie
46. J'~~é~~ répondrai bientôt
47. L'~~é~~ pari est gagné
48. L'~~é~~ jeu va commencer
49. Ce tableau ne vaut pas gros
50. Ce n'est pas du tout ça

nants that follow the [ə], but a very limited one: the [ə] of our nine monosyllables que, te, de, me, ne, le, ce, se, je, is generally retained before a group composed of "s plus consonant," even if only one consonant precedes (in other words, even if a vowel precedes the monosyllable: rien de spécial [rjɛ də spɛsjal]). (We indicate that this exception is very limited because it does not apply to the final [ə] of other words than the nine monosyllables listed above: in sentence 21, une spécialité, quelle spécialité, nouvelle spécialité, the final [ə]'s of une, quelle, nouvelle do drop.)

16-25. [ə] is final in a word (other than the nine monosyllables of 1-15) inside of the phrase.

16-17. One consonant follows the [ə].

18-21. Two consonants follow the [ə]

22-24. Three consonants follow the [ə].

25. The "r or l plus yod" exception (cf. 13-14).

26-31. [ə] is inside of a word (neither initial in a word nor final in a word).

26-29. One consonant follows the [ə].

30-31. The "r or l plus yod" exception (cf. 13-14).

32-42. [ə] in the initial syllable of a word, inside of the sentence.

32-33. The two consonants that cause the [ə] to remain belong to the same word.

34-40. The two consonants that cause the [ə] to remain belong to two different words: the word with the [ə] and the preceding word: une petite [y npe tit].

41-42. The "r or l plus yod" exception (cf. 13-14).

43-50. One [ə] in the initial syllable of a phrase. It is generally dropped as in these phrases. The only monosyllables that would more often retain the [ə] than drop it are Que, Te and De.

51. Cé que tu voudras                      68. Ne lé redis pas      Record 5-B
52. Cé que jé te redis                      69. Ne sé parlent-elles plus ?
53. Jé te démanderai demain              70. Ne mé parle pas
54. Jé te rédémanderai demain              71. Ne mé le rédémande pas
55. Jé te lé rédémanderai demain          72. Ne té précipite pas tant
56. Je lé sais                                      73. Me lé réprochez-vous ?
57. Je lé ferai                                      74. De lé voir me rassure
58. Je lé réferai                                   75. De cé jour tout a changé
59. Je né le réferai pas                        76. De né pas lé savoir me torture
60. Je né me lé rappelle pas                77. De té le rédire m'ennuie
61. Je né te rédémande rien                78. Te lé rappelles-tu ?
62. Je né te lé rendrai pas                79. Que lé diable t'emporte !
63. Je mé tiendrai prêt                        80. Que jé me sens fatigué !
64. Je mé suis levé tôt                        81. Que cé pain est savoureux !
65. Se lé fera-t-il envoyer                82. Que mé dis-tu là ?
66. Ce né serait pas juste                    83. Que né comprenez-vous pas ?
67. Ne lé vois-tu pas                        84. Que dé chance vous avez !
85. Que té faut-il ?
86. On né me réconnait pas --- Il ne mé réconnait pas
87. Il croit que je né me lé rappelle pas --- Il s'étonne que je né me lé rappelle pas
88. Dit-on que ce né serait pas juste. --- Dit-il que ce né serait pas juste ?
89. Etes-vous sûr de né pas lé savoir ? --- Etes-vous certain de né pas lé savoir ?
90. Il sait cé que jé me réproche --- Il veut savoir cé que jé me réproche
91. On désire que jé te lé démande --- Il faut que jé te lé démande
92. Quelle horreur --- Quelle haine
93. Cette histoire --- Cette hache
94. Il semblé humain --- Il semble hautain
95. Il a quitté ses pauvres hardes en toute hâte
96. Ils valent beaucoup --- ils ne valent rien
97. Ils en tiennént compte --- ils en tiennent lieu
98. Nous habitérons là --- Nous habiterons là
99. Nous nous rappélons --- Nous nous rappelions
100. Vends-le      Finis-le      Fais-le entrer      Priez-le d'accepter

51-85. Two or more successive [ə]'s in the initial syllables of a phrase. There are 28 combinations of two monosyllables, initially, in French. Out of those, 2 only drop the first [ə] (sentences 51-55); the 26 others retain the first [ə] and drop the second (sentences 56-85).

51-55. Ce que [skə] and je te [ʒtə] are the only groups of two initial monosyllables that drop the first [ə]. If there are more in the series, all the odd ones are dropped and all the even ones are retained.

56-85. All other initial groups than ce que and je te retain the first [ə]. If there are more in the series, all the odd ones are retained and all the even ones are dropped. Note that this forms a large exception to the general rule that the [ə] is retained only when preceded by two consonants: the initial [ə] of 56-85 is preceded by one consonant only. One factor in its retention is probably the psychological weight of the initial position.

86-91. Two or more successive [ə]'s inside of the phrase.

86. The general law continues to apply: the [ə] is retained after two consonants and dropped after one: On ne me reconnaît pas [ɔ nmə rkə ne pa], il ne me reconnaît pas [i lne mʁə kə ne pa]. (Although we give only one example of this type -- for lack of space -- it occurs very frequently, especially in the conjugation of verbs.)

87-89. There are three "frozen groups" that retain their first [ə] wherever they are (after a vowel as well as after a consonant). Those three frozen groups are: je ne [ʒən], ce ne [sən], de ne [dən]. They will often cause the general law to be broken.

90-91. There are two "frozen groups" that retain their second [ə] wherever they are (after a consonant as well as after a vowel). Those two frozen groups are: ce que [skə], je te [ʒtə]. They will often cause the general law to be broken.

92-95. The exception of the so-called "aspirate h." Before it, the final [ə] of the preceding word is retained: mute h: quelle horreur [kələʁœʁ]; aspirate h: quelle haine [kələ-ɛn].

96-99. A review of the "r or l plus yod" exception (cf. 13-14).

100. Exception involving the pronoun le: the [ə] is retained when it follows a verb.



# PHONETIC SYMBOLS

<u>For French</u>		<u>For English</u>	
p	as in <u>pas</u> se	p	as in ri <u>p</u>
b	<u>bas</u> se	b	ri <u>b</u>
m	<u>mas</u> se	m	ri <u>m</u>
t	<u>to</u> ut	t	se <u>a</u> t
d	<u>do</u> ux	d	se <u>e</u> d
n	<u>no</u> us	n	se <u>e</u> n
k	<u>car</u>	k	pick <u>u</u>
g	<u>gar</u> e	g	pi <u>g</u>
f	<u>fer</u>	ŋ	pi <u>ng</u>
v	<u>vers</u>	f	lea <u>f</u>
s	<u>sel</u>	v	lea <u>ve</u>
z	<u>zè</u> le	s	cea <u>se</u>
ʃ	<u>ch</u> ou	z	seiz <u>e</u>
ʒ	<u>jo</u> ue	ʃ	pressu <u>re</u>
l	<u>ci</u> l	ʒ	pleasu <u>re</u>
r	<u>ci</u> re	θ	thi <u>gh</u>
ŋ	<u>ci</u> gne	ð	thy <u>gh</u>
		c	<u>che</u> ap
		J	<u>je</u> ep
		h	hea <u>p</u>
		l	lea <u>p</u>
		r	rea <u>p</u>
j	<u>hier</u>	j	<u>yet</u>
w	<u>oui</u>	w	<u>wet</u>
ɥ	<u>huit</u>		
i	<u>fi</u> t	i	<u>fee</u> l
u	<u>fo</u> u	I	<u>fi</u> ll
y	<u>fu</u> t	u	<u>fo</u> ol
e	<u>fê</u> e	U	<u>fu</u> ll
ɛ	<u>fer</u>	e, eI	<u>fa</u> il
o	<u>faux</u>	ɛ	<u>fe</u> ll
ɔ	<u>fort</u>	o, oU	<u>fo</u> al
ø	<u>feu</u>	ɔ	<u>fa</u> ll
œ	<u>feu</u> ille	æ	<u>fa</u> t
a	<u>fa</u>	ɑ	<u>fa</u> r
ɑ	<u>fâ</u> che	ɒ	<u>fo</u> x
æ	<u>fen</u> être	ə	<u>fu</u> rn <u>ace</u>
ɑ̃	<u>fend</u>	ʌ	<u>fun</u>
ɔ̃	<u>fond</u>	aU	<u>fo</u> ul
ɛ̃	<u>fin</u>	aI	<u>fi</u> le
œ̃	<u>défunt</u>	ɔI	<u>fo</u> il



